

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-47 remain pending in the application.

Independent claims 1, 23, 32 and 41 remain pending in the application, and are considered allowable over the newly cited U.S. Patent No. 6,250,548 (McClure). For example, these claims are directed to methods and systems to **establish registration** of a voter over a computer network. Such a feature is simply not taught or suggested by the McClure patent.

Independent claims 20 and 46 have been amended to clarify use of a first computer connected to a computer network, by which a citizen can make a dedicated **request for status** of the citizen's voter registration status or electronic ballot status. The McClure patent simply does not teach or suggest any ability to make a separate request specifically for the citizen's voter registration status or the citizen's electronic ballot status.

As discussed herein, all of the pending independent claims are considered allowable.

More particularly, in numbered paragraph 4 on pages 1-13 of the Office Action, claims 1-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by the newly cited McClure et al patent. This rejection is respectfully traversed, as all of Applicant's independent claims recite features that are neither taught nor suggested by the McClure patent.

As generally encompassed by independent claims 1, 23, 32 and 41, exemplary embodiments of the present invention are directed to establishing a registered voter over a computer network. For example, Applicant's Figure 2 illustrates a step 204 in which a citizen 102 can request registration to vote and establish a registered voter (see specification page 13, paragraph [0033]). In contrast, as described in paragraph [0042] on specification page 20, once a citizen 102 becomes a registered voter, a separate request to vote can be made in step 304 of Figure 3A. Thus, Applicants' disclosed establishment of a registered voter over a computer network is separate and distinct from actual voting over a computer network.

Claim 1, which encompasses the foregoing features, is directed to a method for completing and submitting an electronic voter registration form and an electronic ballot over a network. Claim 1 recites, among other features, transmitting registration information from a first computer, via the transaction mediator, to a computer database that resides on a transaction repository server, all of which are networked together, to **establish** a registered voter.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner's comments on page 2 of the Office Action refer to this feature of Applicants' claim 1, and assert that such a feature is disclosed in the McClure patent at column 36, lines 40-42. Reference is also made to column 9, lines 29-33 of the McClure patent. However, none of the citations referred to by the Examiner teach or suggest any ability of the system disclosed by McClure to establish registration of a voter over a computer network. To the contrary, the McClure patent teaches that registration is performed beforehand, and the system of McClure is directed to a voting system.

Referring to column 36, lines 23 et al. of the McClure patent, reference is made to "the process of casting a ballot using the Internet". There is no discussion in column 36, lines 23-30 of registration occurring over the computer network. Column 36, lines 30 et al. describe a voting process "once" a voter is already registered. In other words, a voter must supply all information necessary to pre-register and that information is included in a database. When a voter then later initiates the voting process, information regarding the voter's registration can be accessed so that the voter can identify themselves and begin the voting process (e.g., through the provision of, for example, a password as described at column 36, lines 37-39). A request to vote, as described in this portion of the McClure patent, simply does not anticipate Applicants' claimed methods and systems for establishing voter registration. As such, independent claim 1 is allowable. Independent claims 23, 32 and 41, which are similarly directed to **establishing** a registered voter, are also allowable.

Claims 20 and 46 are also considered allowable, as these claims are directed to a method and system whereby a first computer connected to a computer network can be used by a citizen to request at least one of a citizen's voter registration status and the citizen's electronic status. In rejecting claim 20 on pages 9-10 of the Office

Action, the Examiner asserts that the features of claim 20 are disclosed by the McClure patent.

To the contrary, the McClure patent neither teaches nor suggests any ability of a citizen to specifically request, via a computer connected to an Internet, at least one of a voter registration status and an electronic ballot status. The Examiner asserts on page 9 of the Office Action that "once the voter completes the Internet vote request and the jurisdiction is notified, through their home page, that the request has been made—col. 36, lines 40-42, it is understood that the voter is awaiting/requesting a status of the registration." It is respectfully submitted that a "vote request" does not constitute a status request as presently claimed.

Applicants' presently claimed invention regarding status verification is, for example, described with respect to Figure 5. As discussed on Applicants' specification pages 30 et al., a citizen can make a dedicated request for status of their voter registration and/or electronic ballot over a computer network, a capability which simply does not exist to known computer network based voting systems. Any implicit status request that a voter may derive from feedback received in the system of McClure does not constitute Applicant's claim 20 method which includes a step of receiving, from a first computer connected to a computer network, a citizen's **request regarding status** of at least one of the citizen's voter registration and the citizen's electronic ballot status, and which results in a transmission of status information to the citizen's computer. As such, claim 20 is allowable. Claim 46 recites features similar to those discussed with respect to claim 20 and is also allowable.

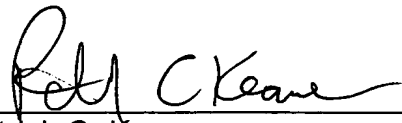
All of the remaining claims depend from the aforementioned independent claims and recite additional advantageous features which further distinguish over the McClure patent.

All objections and rejections raised in the Office Action having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited

Respectfully submitted,

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